(d) the details of new VIPs added to the list for such security since the present Government entered office?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir. The security categoriesation of all protectees in Delhi has been reviewed.

(b) and (c) The security of protectees in reviewed periodically based on latest threat perception in each case and necessary changes in security are made as warranted. This is a continuing process and in the last such reveiw security of 111 persons includeing political VIPs was withdrawn. In the interest of security of the protcctd persons, the list of protected persons and the level of protection provided to them is not released.

(d) After the present Govt, entered office, 34 political VIPs including Ministers have been added to the list of protectees.

Bodo Militancy

2319. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the unlawful activities of militants have been stepped up causing extensive damage to life and property and that the road links between the North East and the country have been cut off;

(b) if so, the details of the estimated loss of propcty caused by the Bodo militants and the number of civilians and security personnel killed in Bodo violence; so far; and

(c) what precise measures have been taken by Government to contain the activities of Bodo militants and to bring normalcy in the State?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) In the first week of June 1998, certain railway bridges and road bridges were damaged by Bodo militants. Emergent repairs were carried out and the road and rail links were restored.

(b) According to available information, the number of persons killed by Bodo violence from 1.1.98 to 1.7.98 is as follows:— Civilians: 142
Security personnel: 8
ethnic violence: 56
Details of estimated loss of property are not maintained.

(c) Various steps have been taken to bring the deteriorating law and order situation in the Bodo areas of Assam under control. Additional units of para military forces and army have been inducted in affected areas. Security of rail and road bridges, rail tracks have been tightened and intensive patrolling and static guard arrangements have been made both on the North and South Bank of Brahmaputra.

About 30 persons connected with the blasts have been arrested. Regular review both at Central and State Government level is being conducted. 18 relief camps have been opened for providing shelter to those displaced in the ethnic violence.

Central Government has also restarted the process of dialogue with moderate Bodo groups to resolve the various outstanding issues so that normalcy is restored.

Arrest of Veerappan

2320. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how many associates of Veerappan, the notirous sandalwood smuggler, have surrendered till date and the details thereof; and

(b) the strategy drawn-up to arrest Veerappan?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADWANI): (a) As per available information a total of 4 persons have surrendered during the current year before the Chief of Special Task Force at Chennai. Three of them surrendered on April 4 and another on April 24, 1998.

(b) A Special Task Force comprising police officers drawn from both Tamil Nadu and Karnataka under the overall command of Shri P. Kalimuthu, IGP and Commissioner of Police, Chennai has been formed to nab Veerappan.

Handling of Heinous Offences by Delhi Police

2321. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 50' given in the Rajya Sabha on 27th May, 1998 and state:

(a) how many such instances were commented adversely by the Supreme CourfHigh Court in the year 1997 and 1998 so far; and

(b) in how many such cases action has been taken against erring police officials?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) There was no case during 1997 and 1998 (upto 4th July, 1998) in which either the Supreme Court of India or the High Court of Delhi had made any adverse remarks as regards casual approach of the investigating officers in handling investigation of heinous crimes, The instances referred to in reply to the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question number 50 answered on the 27th May, 1998 were those in which the lower/district courts had made adverse observations.

Atrocities on weaker sections

2322. CHAUDHARY CHUNNI LAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of cases of atrocities committed on SCs and STs in

the country in the previous year ending December, 1997;

(b) how many cases were sent Court and how many resulted n. convictions;

(c) whether Government propose to set up special courts to try such cases; if not, the steps proposed in this regard; and

(d) what other measures are being taken by Government to check recurrence of atrocities on weaker sections of the society?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) According to available information, 27..751 cases of atrocities against the Scheduled Castes and 4,575 cases of atrocities against the Scheduled Tribes were reported during the year 1997.

(b) Information is being collected.

(c) The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 already provides that, for the purpose of providing for speedy trial, the State Government shall, with the concurrence of the Chief Justice of the High Court, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify for each district a Court of Session to be a Special Court to try the offences under the Act. According to information available, some States like Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu have also set up Special Courts exclusively to deal with cases or atrocities against the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

(d) "Public Order" and "Police" being State subjects, it is essentially for the State Governments to take measures to check cases of atrocities against weaker sections of the society. However, the Central Government has been, from time to time sending advisories to the State Governments on the sdbject and is also providing financial assistance to them for improving their policing infrastructure.

ISI role in Andhra Riots

2323. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assessed